



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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October 3, 2008

TO: Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke, Chair  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe   
Acting Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – O'CONNER AND  
ATKINS GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of O'Conner and Atkins Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by O'Conner and Atkins Group Home, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

O'Conner and Atkins Group Home is an eight-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 5-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, O'Conner and Atkins Group Home was providing services for five DCFS children.

The Group Home is located in the Second District.

**Scope of Review**

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

### **Summary of Findings**

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement except for a few deficient areas.

O'Conner and Atkins Group Home needs to clean the grout and caulking around the bathtub. The Group Home also needs to develop comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that include input from all members of the treatment team and encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

### **Review of Report**

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Don Chadwick at (626) 293-1102.

WLW:MMO:DC:CC:bg

### **Attachments**

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer  
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS  
Susan Kerr, Senior Deputy Director, DCFS  
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer  
Joyce Brantley, Board Chair, O'Conner and Atkins Group Home  
Virginia O'Conner, Executive Director, O'Conner and Atkins Group Home  
Public Information Office  
Audit Committee

**O'Conner and Atkins Group Home  
Los Angeles, California 90062  
License Number: 191871781  
Rate Classification Level: 7**

**I. Facility and Environment**

**Method of assessment – Observation**

**Comments:**

O'Conner and Atkins Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

Overall, the interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment. However, the grout and caulking around the bath tub has mold and mildew.

Generally, children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. However, there is writing and scratch marks on the dresser drawers in the bedroom. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

**Recommendations**

**1. O'Conner and Atkins management:**

- a. Clean the grout and caulking around the bathtub.**
- b. Remove the writing and scratch marks from the dresser drawers in the bedroom.**

## **II. Program Services**

### **Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Two**

#### **Comments:**

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current. However, all members of the treatment team are not included in the development and implementation of the NSPs. In addition, the NSPs are not comprehensive, measurable, and time limited and do not include short or long term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

### **Recommendations**

#### **2. O'Conner and Atkins management:**

- a. Include input from all members of the treatment team in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans.
- b. Develop comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that are comprehensive, measurable, time limited and include short and long term goals.

## **III. Educational and Emancipation Services**

### **Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Two**

#### **Comments:**

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

### **Recommendation**

There are no recommendations for this section.

## **IV. Recreation and Activities**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Two**

### **Comments:**

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

### **Recommendation**

There are no recommendations for this section.

## **V. Psychotropic Medication**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents**

### **Comments:**

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication and are aware of their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

### **Recommendation**

There are no recommendations for this section.

## **VI. Personal Rights**

**Method of assessment – Interviews with children**

**Sample size: Two**

**Comments:**

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks. Children also receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

**Recommendation**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

**VII. Clothing and Allowance****Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Two**

**Comments:**

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. However, children are not encouraged or assisted in creating or maintaining photo albums/life books.

**Recommendation**

- 3. O'Conner and Atkins management encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**

**O'Conner and Atkins Group Home**

Los Angeles, 90062

**Department Of Auditor-Controller**

500 West Temple Street

Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Corrective Action Plan**

**I. FACILITY and ENVIRONMENT**

- a. Clean the grout and caulking around the bathtub.

The recommendation has been implemented and O'Conner and Atkins staff has cleaned and maintained the grout and caulking in the bathroom. Staff daily will clean and maintain bathtub. Facility Manager will conduct weekly maintenance.

- b. Remove the writing and scratch marks from the dresser drawers in the bedroom.

The recommendation has been implemented. Staff has repainted and varnished the bedroom dresser and drawers and there are no visible scratches or markings. Facility manager will monitor bedroom furniture and all staff will encourage residence to not mark or scratch furniture. All staff will inspect facility and make notes to administrator anything in need of repair.

**II. PROGRAM SERVICES**

- a. Include all members of the treatment team in the development and implementation of the Needs and Service Plans.

The recommendation has been implemented for O'Conner and Atkins Group Home by creating a form to invite the residents CSW, family members, teachers to share input in the development of the Needs and Service Plan. Input can include phone calls, in person, or by way of letters. House Social Worker will fax copies to CSW to sign completed Needs and Services Plans. Administrator, also part of the treatment team, will monitor all treatment team meetings monthly.

- b. Develop comprehensive Needs and Service Plans that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time limited and include short and long term goals.

The recommendation has been implemented by O'Conner and Atkins Group Home. The House Social Worker will ensure that the Needs and Service Plans are measurable, and attainable. The House Social Worker has met with representatives of the "RUFFIN CONSULTION GROUP" and refined the Needs and Service form to reflect short and long term goals, attainability, and specific goals.

Ruffin consultants along with the administrator will assist in monitoring Needs and Service Plans monthly to ensure that the Needs and Service plans remain specific and address short and long term objectives and goals. Administrator will monitor ever thirty days.

#### **VII. CLOTHING and ALLOWANCE**

3. O'Conner and Atkins management encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

The recommendation has been implemented and O'Conner and Atkins staff has found the missing Life Book and has placed it in a safe place for the child. Staff will also make sure to continue to assist with all the residents to have life books and or photo albums. Facility manage will monitor and assist clients with Photo Albums and Life Books.

It is also noted that in the future, the O'Conner's staff will contact the Auditor immediately if such an item has been located and faxed for review.

O'Conner and Atkins Group Home has reviewed all the recommendations by the Auditor-Controller's office. The administrator has held an all staff inservice to discuss and review. Facility manages will monitor monthly to maintain all area deficiencies are in compliance. During staff daily monitoring, notes will be made and presented to the administrator for immediate attention.

Tony Chustz



Administrator

5/19/2008